

TABLE II-5: Conceptual Structure of Desired Conditions Matrix

SAMPLE ECOLOGICAL HABITATS	UPPER MONTANE CONIFEROUS FORESTS	GRASSLAND, MEADOW, AND HERBACEOUS
Sample Management Zones	Example Visitor Experience and Resource Desired Conditions by Management Sub-Zone	
Wilderness Zones. The overall management objectives for the Wilderness zones ¹ include management for protection of Outstandingly Remarkable Values, with an emphasis on protection and enhancement of natural resource ORVs. Manage for ecosystem integrity and preserve natural biodiversity. Allow natural processes to prevail. Mitigate, reduce, or eliminate human-caused impacts. Manage for a high-quality wilderness visitor experience. Protect all wilderness values (ecological, geological, scientific, educational, scenic, or historical in nature). In accordance with the Wilderness Act, administrative operational functions in the Yosemite Wilderness should use the “minimum requirement” guidance concept in all activities. Manage for the preservation of cultural resources.		
1A – Wilderness Untrailed	Upper Montane Coniferous Forests–Untrailed Desired Visitor Experience and Resource Conditions The Upper Montane Coniferous Forests–Untrailed zone would be primarily free of signs of modern human presence, with extremely high opportunity for solitude due to the remoteness of the area and lack of trails. Management activities in this zone would be minimal, allowing resources and natural processes to exist in their most pristine state. Visitor experience would be primarily based on hiking through often difficult terrain. There would be no formal trails or directional markers in this zone. There would be few, if any, human encounters, and wilderness skills and knowledge could be necessary to safely navigate these areas. Natural and cultural resources could be observed, but there would be no formal interpretation or management of the resources. This area would provide substantial opportunities for scientific study of natural processes in undisturbed conditions. This zone would be managed with very low tolerance for resource degradation from visitor use, and management action could be taken to limit visitor access if such degradation occurred. Natural species diversity should be maintained within an acceptable range of variation. In drier areas, restore processes to favor species and communities common under frequent, light surface fires. Maintain a safe visitor environment in developed areas. Allow natural processes, including insects and diseases, to operate essentially unimpeded. Monitor non-native insects and diseases for forest impacts.	Grassland, Meadow, and Herbaceous–Untrailed Desired Visitor Experience and Resource Conditions The Grassland, Meadow, and Herbaceous–Untrailed zone would be primarily free of signs of modern human presence, with extremely high opportunity for solitude due to the remoteness of the area and lack of trails. Management activities in this zone would be minimal, allowing resources and natural processes to exist in their most pristine state. Visitor experience would be primarily based on hiking through often difficult terrain. There would be no formal trails or directional markers in this zone. There would be few, if any, human encounters, and wilderness skills and knowledge could be necessary to safely navigate these areas. Natural and cultural resources could be observed, but there would be no formal interpretation or management of the resources. This area would provide substantial opportunities for scientific study of natural processes in undisturbed conditions. This zone would be managed with very low tolerance for resource degradation from visitor use, and management action could be taken to limit visitor access if such degradation occurred. Wet meadows should be maintained with water tables that remain at or near the surface throughout the year, preserving assemblages with native species (generally sedges predominate). Where feasible, restore wet meadow conditions in those sites where humans have intervened. Restore and maintain meadow systems, with human-induced conifer invasion held in check (or a dynamic maintained). Maintain natural species composition within an acceptable natural range of variability. Maintain productivity within the acceptable natural range of variability.

¹ These objectives are consistent with the *Wilderness Management Plan* (1989).

TABLE II-5: Conceptual Structure of Desired Conditions Matrix (continued)

SAMPLE ECOLOGICAL HABITATS	UPPER MONTANE CONIFEROUS FORESTS	GRASSLAND, MEADOW, AND HERBACEOUS
Sample Management Zones	Example Visitor Experience and Resource Protection Desired Conditions by Management Sub-Zone	
1B – Wilderness Trailed Travel	<p style="text-align: center;">Upper Montane Coniferous Forests–Trailed Travel Desired Visitor Experience and Resource Conditions</p> <p>The Upper Montane Coniferous Forests–Trailed Travel zone would be characterized by light to moderate use focused on marked and maintained trails. Opportunities for solitude would range from moderate to high. There would be some management presence to accommodate resource protection and visitor use. Most visitors would experience this area by hiking, although a small percentage of visitors have traditionally used pack animals and could continue to do so. Visitor encounters would be infrequent, except in areas common for campsites and at key trail junctions. While there would be opportunities for challenge and adventure, the well-marked and maintained trails would allow visitors with a diversity of hiking abilities to experience the wilderness. This zone would be managed with very low tolerance for resource degradation from visitor use, and management action could be taken to limit visitor access if such degradation occurred. Natural species diversity should be maintained within an acceptable range of variation. In drier areas, restore processes to favor species and communities common under frequent, light surface fires. Maintain a safe visitor environment in developed areas. Allow natural processes, including insects and diseases, to operate essentially unimpeded. Monitor non-native insects and diseases for forest impacts.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Grassland, Meadow, and Herbaceous–Trailed Travel Desired Visitor Experience and Resource Conditions</p> <p>The Grassland, Meadow, and Herbaceous–Trailed Travel zone would be characterized by light to moderate use focused on marked and maintained trails. Opportunities for solitude would range from moderate to high. There would be some management presence to provide for resource protection and visitor use management. Most visitors would experience this area by hiking, although a small percentage of visitors have traditionally used pack animals and may continue to do so. Visitor encounters would be infrequent except in areas common for campsites and at key trail junctions. While there would be opportunities for challenge and adventure, the well-marked and maintained trails would allow visitors with a diversity of hiking abilities to experience the wilderness. This zone would be managed with very low tolerance for resource degradation from visitor use, and management action could be taken to limit visitor access if such degradation occurred. Wet meadows should be maintained with water tables that remain at or near the surface throughout the year, preserving assemblages with native species (generally sedges) predominating. Where feasible, restore wet meadow conditions in those sites where humans have intervened. Restore and maintain meadow systems, with human-induced conifer invasion held in check (or a dynamic maintained). Maintain natural species composition within an acceptable natural range of variability. Maintain productivity within the acceptable natural range of variability.</p>
1C – Wilderness Heavy Use Trail	<p style="text-align: center;">Upper Montane Coniferous Forests–Heavy Use Trail Desired Visitor Experience and Resource Conditions</p> <p>The Upper Montane Coniferous Forests–Heavy Use Trail zone would be characterized by high levels of use on marked and maintained trails and associated areas. Due to high use levels, opportunities for solitude at peak times would be more limited on trails in this area. In some locations, sections of paved or rocked trails and fencing could be used to direct visitor use away from sensitive ecosystems. Most visitors would experience this area by hiking, although a small percentage of visitors have traditionally used pack animals and could continue to do so. Encounters with other visitors could be frequent during certain periods of the day or at key trail junctions, vistas, and other high-use locations. The well-marked and maintained trails would allow for visitors with a diversity of hiking abilities to experience the wilderness. This zone would be managed with a low tolerance for resource degradation due to visitor use. Natural species diversity should be maintained within an acceptable range of variation. In drier areas, restore processes to favor species and communities common under frequent, light surface fires. Maintain a safe visitor environment in developed areas. Allow natural processes, including insects and diseases, to operate essentially unimpeded. Monitor non-native insects and diseases for forest impacts.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Grassland, Meadow, and Herbaceous–Heavy Use Trail Desired Visitor Experience and Resource Conditions</p> <p>The Grassland, Meadow, and Herbaceous–Heavy Use Trail Zone would be characterized by high levels of use on marked and maintained trails and associated areas. Due to high use levels, opportunities for solitude at peak times would be more limited on trails in this area. In some locations, sections of paved or rocked trails and fencing could be used to direct visitor use away from sensitive ecosystems. Most visitors would experience this area by hiking, although a small percentage of visitors have traditionally used pack animals and could continue to do so. Encounters with other visitors could be frequent during certain periods of the day or at key trail junctions, vistas, and other high-use locations. The well-marked and maintained trails would allow for visitors with a diversity of hiking abilities to experience the wilderness. This zone would be managed with a low tolerance for resource degradation due to visitor use. Wet meadows should be maintained with water tables that remain at or near the surface throughout the year, preserving assemblages with native species (generally sedges predominate). Where feasible, restore wet meadow conditions in those sites where humans have intervened. Restore and maintain meadow systems, with human-induced conifer invasion held in check (or a dynamic maintained). Maintain natural species composition within an acceptable natural range of variability. Maintain productivity within the acceptable natural range of variability.</p>

TABLE II-5: Conceptual Structure of Desired Conditions Matrix (continued)

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1D – Wilderness Designated Overnight	<p style="text-align: center;">Upper Montane Coniferous Forests–Designated Overnight Desired Visitor Experience and Resource Conditions</p> <p>The Upper Montane Coniferous Forests–Designated Overnight zone would be characterized by the heaviest overnight use of all areas in the Wilderness zones. Use of all Designated Overnight areas would be centered at destination locations with facilities for resource protection and visitor use, located specifically at the Little Yosemite Valley Campground, Moraine Dome Campground, Merced Lake Backpackers Campground, and the Merced Lake High Sierra Camp (a potential Wilderness addition). Opportunities for solitude would range from low to moderate depending on the season. Social interaction would be common. Most visitors would experience this area by hiking. Small percentages use pack animals and could continue to do so. Visitor encounters with others would be frequent during much of the hiking seasons. The well-marked trails and facilities would allow for a diversity of users to experience the wilderness. Management presence would be moderate to high in order to prevent or mitigate most adverse impacts. The Designated Overnight zone would be managed with a low tolerance for resource degradation due to visitor use. Facilities such as signs and fencing could be used to prevent unacceptable impacts. Campsites would be located away from any sensitive natural or cultural areas, including meadows, streams, lakes, or historic sites, to minimize impacts. Natural species diversity should be maintained within an acceptable range of variation. In drier areas, restore processes to favor species and communities common under frequent, light surface fires. Maintain a safe visitor environment in developed areas. Allow natural processes, including insects and diseases, to operate essentially unimpeded. Monitor non-native insects and diseases for forest impacts.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Grassland, Meadow, and Herbaceous–Designated Overnight Desired Visitor Experience and Resource Conditions</p> <p>The Grassland, Meadow, and Herbaceous–Designated Overnight zone would be characterized by the heaviest overnight use of all areas of the Wilderness zones. Use of all Designated Overnight areas would be centered at destination locations with facilities for resource protection and visitor use, located specifically at the Little Yosemite Valley Campground, Moraine Dome Campground, Merced Lake Backpackers Campground, and the Merced Lake High Sierra Camp (a potential Wilderness addition). Opportunities for solitude would range from low to moderate depending on the season. Social interaction would be common. Most visitors would experience this area by hiking. Small percentages use pack animals and could continue to do so. Visitor encounters with others would be frequent during much of the hiking seasons. The well-marked trails and facilities would allow for a diversity of users to experience the wilderness. Management presence would be moderate to high in order to prevent or mitigate most adverse impacts. The Designated Overnight zone would be managed with a low tolerance for resource degradation due to visitor use. Facilities such as signs and fencing could be used to prevent unacceptable impacts. Campsites would be located away from any sensitive natural or cultural areas, including meadows, streams, lakes, or historic sites, to minimize impacts. Wet meadows should be maintained with water tables that remain at or near the surface throughout the year, preserving assemblages with native species (generally sedges predominate). Where feasible, restore wet meadow conditions in those sites where humans have intervened. Restore and maintain meadow systems, with human-induced conifer invasion held in check (or a dynamic maintained). Maintain natural species composition within an acceptable natural range of variability. Maintain productivity within the acceptable natural range of variability.</p>